



INTEGRAL[®] Yoga

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Integral Yoga and You

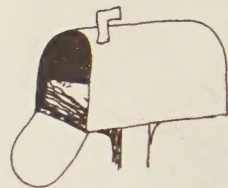
INTEGRAL YOGA Magazine is the official organ of the Integral Yoga Institutes, Groups, Teaching Centers and Satchidananda Ashrams. These centers are vehicles through which Sri Swami Satchidanandaji's teachings of Integral Yoga are lived and shared. Conducting ongoing programs in the various aspects of Yoga—including Hatha, Raja, Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana Yogas—the centers also offer instruction on Yogic diet and other related topics. There are open classes, courses, teachers' training programs, universal worship services, and also retreats for beginners and more advanced students. Those interested are invited to call or visit the centers, and a live-in program is also possible.

Besides their teaching function, the Ashrams also provide an opportunity for an experience in total Yogic living. The ashram in Pomfret Center, Connecticut has a health clinic, national audio-video and book publishing and distribution services, a natural foods store, a two-acre organic garden, an Integral Yoga School for children, and a number of cottage industries where members practice selfless service. There is also, at this time, an ashram in Santa Barbara, California.

For more information, to arrange a Yoga program for any group, or to be put on our mailing list, please feel free to contact any of the centers listed on the inside front cover. We are here to serve you.

OM SHANTHI OM PEACE

Letters to Sri Gurudev



Thank you so much for the teachings which give meaning and guidance to my life.

It is difficult to describe the incredible changes in my life and those around me since the beginning of my practice of Yoga. I have seen threads of light being pulled out of the darkness. Truly, with the practice of meditation, I am learning to love the silence that is more soothing than a lullabye.

*We shovel mud from the driveway
pull limbs and roots off the
road*

*a rainbow rides the shoulder of
the mountain*

*gentle rain softens the mud on
our shovels.*

*O Lord, how pliable the earth is
after the storm*

that shook us to our knees.

*-Krishnadasi Mouw,
Santa Barbara*

One morning, at 8 A.M., a little girl was hit by a car outside the Montreal Integral Yoga Institute. After a few seconds hesitation, I decided to become involved. I ran for a blanket and my shoes, and ran into the street after calling an ambulance. She was horribly injured in the head, and I had trouble centering in the mantra as I tried to calm her and prayed for your help. I could feel the shock as I watched everybody's

reaction. The police were inefficient because they were too disturbed. I think I was the only person who remained semi-detached enough to think properly for the child's welfare.

After I came back in and cried a bit, I sat before the altar wondering what was in this that I was supposed to learn. It came to me that I have grown enough to care about everyone and that, through your divine grace, I've at least a glimpse of how useful a yogi can be. I decided that all I wanted to do is serve, serve, and keep on serving. I am so happy and grateful to you, Master. I hope to become a better tool for you.

Please pray for that little girl and I'll try to visit her.

-S. L., Montreal,
Canada

*You show us what joy exists in
Heaven's Peace.*

*You show us that the sharing of
love, the giving of oneself
is akin to an eternal flame
which forever burns and shows
the true light of love.*

*You show that selflessness
unlocks the chains that
forever limit us in our
unending search towards inner
fulfillment.*

*You show us that God is a Gate
whose doors are forever open,
if only we would enter in
full person—Mind, Body, and
Spirit.*

*The Key is to enter—"That's All".
Om Shanthi, Shanthi, Shanthi,
Peace to you always.*

-Atiba Wade,
Bermuda

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Sri Swami Satchidananda

SRI SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA is a master of Yoga, a world spiritual teacher, and Guru of the students of Integral Yoga. He is dedicated to the ecumenical movement, his motto being "Truth is One, paths are many." His main residences are in Pomfret Center, Connecticut during summer and Santa Barbara, California in the winter. He also travels widely, sharing with people through every possible medium: lectures, conferences, radio, TV and newspaper interviews, books and visits to schools, seminaries, rehabilitation centers and many other groups.

YOGA:

A Continuous Life Process

Sri Swami Satchidananda

Yoga is not something different, imported from somewhere else. It's a Sanskrit word which means "union", but we have a similar thought in the West as well—the word "communion". Yoga means tranquillity of mind and flexibility of body which the Bible presents as purity of heart. Talking about the only needed quality to see God, the Bible says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". Whoever is pure in heart shall see God. The Bible didn't say whoever is white, black, short, tall, Western, rich, poor, or well-educated. It also didn't say whoever built temples or churches, whoever printed thousands of scriptures or burnt any amount of candles every Sunday. It's immaterial whether you do those things or not. If you do it, it's all right. But what is the ultimate requirement to see God? Purity of heart—that's Yoga. That's religion, and that should be our life. Our religion and yoga need not be different from our day-to-day lives.

CLEAN YOUR HEART

Just by going to church every Sunday you cannot become a Christian, it's not the going alone. What should happen? Why do you go? To clean your heart. Why do you light the candles? To bring the Light within, or at least to remember that you should get the Light. So all these so-called rituals, practices, services, or worships are aimed towards keeping the heart clean.

The Bible has used a beautiful term, "the heart", which stands for physical as well as mental heart. If you say somebody is a kind-hearted man, or a soft-hearted man, you don't just put your finger there to see how soft the heart is. If you call somebody your "sweetheart", do you think it will be tasty there? No, the word "heart" stands for both physical and subtle, body as well as mind. It's a pretty word. In one word they are trying to tell us two things. Let your physical heart be clean and mental heart be clean. Blessed



are the pure in heart, physically and mentally. By not putting in too much cholesterol or too much nicotine we won't need to go to the heart clinics. There is no heart problem for a yogi, but if you do not have heart problems you are already a yogi. That is the heart of it.

Physical heart represents the entire body; in a way, the entire body gets its nourishment from the heart. The heart supplies everything; it is the heart of the person, so keep it clean. Anything that would adversely affect your physical heart, stay away from it. And that is where we recommend certain restrictions in food, what you eat and drink. We recommend clean air and proper exercise. At the same time we recommend not to over-exercise. The heart needs exercise but it should not be more than its capacity. These are all parts of religion or yoga.

Unfortunately, in the modern world, many of the important ideas that once prevailed in various religions have been

somehow ignored or comfortably forgotten. If you read the lives of sages and saints, even sixteenth-century Christian sages, almost every saint talked about clean food. To be more precise, they said clean, vegetarian food; they never recommended meat, liquor, or alcohol. And we, in the name of yoga, are trying to bring up those teachings again.

Many things we do in our lives. Knowing that it is bad we still do it, and we find it hard to get out of it, to stay away from it. Take a census. Let the whole world answer your question: "Is smoking good?". Let the answer come from their hearts. They will all say, "No, it's not necessary. It's not good for health, it's not good for the lungs". They all know that, including the man who paid a great amount for a big poster, "Naturally Refreshes You". Yes, let him touch his heart and tell you whether a cigarette is going to naturally refresh you. No. We all know that. "But if I don't say that"

the advertiser says, "How can I get my money?". And the man who smokes says, "I don't want to, but somehow I got used to it. I don't have the will power to stay away from it".

BUILD UP THE STRENGTH

That's an important point to be noted. We all know what is right and what is wrong, but we don't seem to have the strength to stay away from that. To follow the right and stay away from the wrong, we have to build up that strength. Our minds must be really strong. When you say, "I don't want to touch this anymore", you should be able to stay from that. You should be able to forget it. If somebody brings it tomorrow, you may not even recognize what it is. Suppose you say, "I am not going to smoke. I don't want cigarettes anymore. I am forgetting cigarettes". If the next day somebody brings a cigarette, "What is this stick? It looks like something nice. What is it"? You will not even be able to recognize it as a cigarette. You completely erased that form and name from your brain.

You could do it if you develop the will. Developing the will is very important. That is where you get concentration and meditation to strengthen the mind. Meditation is a kind of sophisticated term; but in normal, plain language it means constantly thinking of something, that's all. We all know the proverb, "As you think, so you become". If you keep on thinking of something you are going to realize that, because the mind gets that strong to accomplish what it wants. Now, to strengthen the mind we

should know why it is weak. How does it happen?

Probably here we have to go into a physics lab, or try some mechanical engineering. Take a large tank, and fill it up with water. The tank has about nine big taps all around, but when you fill the tank with water you fail to close all the taps. You keep on filling. You wanted to build some pressure in one tap, but all the water keeps flowing out. How would you build the pressure in one tap? Simple, just close off the rest of the taps. Call it physics or mechanical engineering or anything. When you close the other eight taps, you get the maximum pressure from the remaining tap. The water tank can be several stories high, but the minute you open a couple of taps the pressure comes down and the level of the water won't reach that high.

Mind also functions in the same way. You simultaneously open the tap of the mind in a hundred areas, and in each area you see the mind going, but without any force. The level has just simply dropped.

Certainly you want to achieve everything, but not at the same time. So close all the channels; open that one channel which you want predominantly, and that is what you call concentration. Simple, you are blocking your mind from going into all channels and directing it to one channel, on one thing. Your concentration can be on a thing, an idea, a prayer, or a *mantram*. And, of course, the mind has a tendency to run in all the other holes also. Every time you see it running to another hole, screw

"Let there be a little dedication. Whenever we fail in that, sit and analyze. Constantly keep an eye on what you are doing, eating, or thinking. Yoga is not just a practice for a few hours of the day."

the tap tight. Train the mind to run through only one tap.

You can achieve that if you train the mind. Don't think that the minute you sit for concentration you can do it overnight, no. It takes a little while because the mind got used to running here and there in hundreds of directions. Gently you block the way; you don't need to be rough and rude with the mind. Be nice, as a mother would train a baby. "Oh my sweet, that's not the way. Just do it this way, then I will send you there. Be nice." Like a horse trainer trains the horse. Our motive is not to break the mind, but to train it. The mind is a wild horse. It's a restless monkey, but you can train it. It takes some time. That's where the practice of *dharana* (concentration) comes in—to regulate the mind and thoughts. You are trying to control the mind, to send it through one channel. It might be rather difficult to achieve, but it's worth it. Also, there are other helpful aids to achieve this purpose.

YOUR BODY SHOULD COOPERATE

That's where your body should cooperate. You may sit and want to concentrate on something. Of course your mind is not running here and there; you are concentrating on one thing. Take a flower. "Oh, it's a nice, beautiful flower. Oh, what a beautiful one, it's a nice rose. The Lord created it. Ahh, it's nice and fragrant." And while you are saying, "Nice flower", the ankle says, "Oh, what can I do, you are hurting me"! And then the back says, "No, I can't sit anymore, I have to lie down". And if you lie down you will not be concentrating on the flower. Instead, you will go to sleep.

That's why we need the help of the body. You need a healthy body, which would not complain about any aches and pains. You also need a comfortable and steady position. Otherwise you are not going to concentrate on the rose but on the headache. The body can distract your mind and that is the reason you practice some *hatha yoga*—to get

rid of all the toxins. Why the aches and pains? The toxins that we have put in now want to come out here and there. Deep in the organs, the toxins cause pain and build tension. A body with tension will create problems, so relax the body. See that there is no poisonous matter in the body.

Again, that means taking care of things so that you would not get poison into your system, so we watch our eating. All these things are interrelated. You have to eat the right stuff so there won't be any toxins. You have to digest it well. You also have to eat the right quantity; if you eat more, you can't digest all of it and the rest gets fermented. You get gas which tries to rise and you feel heaviness in the chest. So, yoga enters into every area of health and prevention: your food, eating habits, strengthening the digestion, and helping your hormones to function well and flow well.

STEEL SHOULD BEND

That's why after the *yamas* and *niyamas* (the restraints and observances of *Raja Yoga*) come the yoga postures and breathing practices. You relax the body and eliminate the toxins through the postures. You burn the toxins, then put in more vitality through the *pranayama* (breathing practices). Then your body becomes strong, at the same time relaxed. It's not necessarily true that a strong body should be a stiff body; a stiff body can never be a strong body. Steel should bend. A hard steel is no longer steel; it is nothing but cast iron. So a relaxed and strong

body makes a healthy body, and *asana* (posture) and *pranayama* help you in making your physical and vital bodies strong and healthy. With that, your meditation is comfortable. You can sit for hours totally relaxed, no complaints from your back, ankles, or thighs. Then you will be able to concentrate well.

But if you can bypass the body and then concentrate, you don't need to practice all that. Maybe a few could do that. They don't need yoga practices then, or *hatha yoga*. But most people need it. Then, if your concentration becomes more firm, more permanent, and if the mind doesn't run here and there when all the taps are closed and the mind flows to only one channel continuously, you call that meditation. Then the mind gets real strength and becomes dynamic. And, as you have made your mind already clean by your dedicated life, you will be using this powerful mind for the benefit of humanity.

Your mind may have become dynamic and powerful, but if it is still dirty and egoistic, what would you do with that instrument? You will use it for your own benefit. You won't even hesitate to hurt others for your sake, because there's no dedication in your life. That is the reason why, even before you practice concentration and meditation and achieve some powers, you should see that you are cleaning your mind. That is the reason why the foundation of the practices is the moral precepts. So, let us simultaneously practice all these. Let there be a little dedication. Whenever we fail in

that, sit and analyze. Constantly keep an eye on what you are doing, eating, or thinking. Yoga is not just a practice for a few hours of the day, no. It's a continuous life process.

Train your mind to concentrate. Focus it, but don't get disturbed or dejected because the mind runs here and there. It's habituated in that way. It takes time, like your own pet. If you leave it untied, it just roams around all over the house. All of a sudden, if you want to keep it in one place it shouts and yells and makes all kinds of noise. It makes the house a hell. But if you are really steady and you say, "No, however much you cry you are going to sit in the same place. You are not going to roam all over the house", then it knows what you really want. Slowly it will quiet down. And then one day you don't even need to tie it. Simply say, "Baby, sleep there". It will stay there. Unless you call, it won't even come, because you trained it well. The mind is like that.

The mind can change the body any way it wants. In *hatha yoga*, we aim ultimately to make the mind calm. And, instead of doing something directly with the mind, we work through the body because mind expresses through the body. In fact the body itself is an outcome of the mind. Mind over matter. So, to calm the mind and its agitation you calm the agitation of the body. You control the movements of the body—that is where the *hatha yoga* comes in.

To give you a nice analogy, take the automobile. As we all know when a car starts moving on the road, where does the

very first movement occur? The movement of the key brings the spark, the starter moves, then the axle moves. But the very movement starts within the cylinder. The piston moves up and down and, through many connections, the wheels ultimately move. The wheels are the extreme, outer expression of the movement. Even though the movement starts at the piston it ends up at the wheel, and because of that the entire car moves. Then, when we want to stop the car, do we apply the brake at the piston where the movement started? No, at the wheel. Even though the movement started at the piston, its maximum expression is at the wheel. You could try applying the brake directly at the piston where the movement originated. But, because of the fast movement at the piston, it will break. So, the best position for a brake is at the wheel, where the movement expresses itself to the maximum degree.

FIND THE BRAKE

In the same way with the body. According to Bhagavan Patanjali, "*Yogas chitta vritti nirodha*", to stop the movement of the mind is yoga. Now, following the same principle as in the car engine, if I want to raise my forearm, how do I do it? First I have to think of it. Then the messages go to the motor nerves and are sent to the biceps and triceps muscles. Then the forearm lifts up. So the thought is the first movement and the physical action is the last movement. Likewise, in the physical practices we learn to control the mind, indirectly and easily, by applying a "brake" to

the body. As in the example of the automobile, here we can control subtle, inner movement (thought) by simply restraining the maximum, outer expression (physical movement).

In *hatha yoga*, literally speaking, the posture is defined as "sthira sukham asanam", steady and comfortable pose is an *asana*. So, in all these physical postures, your aim is to accomplish one steady and comfortable position which you call meditation posture, Lotus Pose, or any comfortable cross-legged pose. To achieve good meditation you have to have one steady pose, and for this you prepare the body—because a body filled with toxins, weak muscles, and weak nerves cannot be made to sit quietly for a long time. So, as we mentioned before, *hatha yoga* helps eliminate the toxins to make the body more healthy and supple. When that is done, then you can achieve one sitting posture.

That means you have controlled the body and its movements. Easily this carries over to the mind. Because, if you just sit quietly even though the mind may be greatly agitated—simply sit in a good position quietly, and very soon you will see the mind calms down by itself. Because there is no physical movement the breath becomes slow. Mind, breath, and body—these are the interconnections. To give you a clearer example of the connection between the body and the breath, when you run fast you breathe heavily. You are only using your legs, why should you breathe fast? The reason is that your movements wear out certain tissues. Excess movement causes excess

friction. Friction causes heat, and heat burns up certain things. Anything that is burned up you call ash. When you accumulate this ash in the system it has to be eliminated, and you breathe out carbon dioxide. To replace it with fresh energy, you breathe in oxygen. So, if you don't have vigorous movement, you don't create as much ash. Then you don't need to breathe heavily.

THE BREATH STOPS

That is why, if you just sit quietly without any movement whatsoever, within a few minutes you will see the breath has slowed down completely, almost to a stop. And that is what we call the *kevala kumbaka*, the natural retention of the breath. You might notice this phenomenon when your mind is deeply involved in something. Suppose you are thinking deeply about a problem for several minutes. All of a sudden you finish and say, "Ahhhhh, I got it". Why is that sigh? The reason is that your breath stopped when you were deeply thinking. When the mind was almost fixed on one point, the mind was not moving around so the breath stopped. The body also stopped all its movements, so there was a natural retention of the breath. Then, after the exhalation when you sighed, to make up the oxygen you take in a deep breath. That is the proof that the breath will stop when the bodily movements will stop. When the mind stops functioning, the breath will stop. The breath, or the *prana*, is the link between the mind and the body. So to calm the mind you calm the breath; to calm the breath you calm the body. Through *hatha yoga* you work from

one side; through meditation you work from the other side, and through *pranayama* you begin in the middle. And that is why I call Integral Yoga "do everything". Wherever you are, if you are by yourself—meditate. If you like *pranayama*—do it. If you prefer *hatha yoga*—do it. Learn all three so they can help each other.

KNOW THE BENEFITS

These practices are all just soaps. When you have done something that is not good for you, you look for something to undo what you have done, to clean you of the toxins and scrub you. There is a nice, scented soap called *Mantra Japa*—apply it. Another soap is called *Headstand*—apply it. A third soap is called *Kriya Yoga*—practice it. Practice anything. They are all something to do to undo, to clean the body and mind. You yourself can do it; the spiritual teacher can only guide you, give you all the methods to try. It depends how sincere you are, how serious you are. According to Bhagavan Patanjali, to get the benefit you have to practice for a long time, without break, and with total interest. When will these things help you? When you are tired of what you have done. You were doing things with a different attitude, eating something wrong, drinking something wrong, inhaling something wrong, with a selfish attitude. When you have tried all these things and know they are not going to help you anymore, you can renounce them. Such a person is called a spiritual seeker.

In the yogic life, if you know why you are doing, you

would enjoy everything however difficult it may be. That's very important. In fact, that is what you call yogic action. A yogi will perform everything to enjoy. The whole life is a joy for him. If it is going to be a suffering, why do you even want to be a yogi then? In fact it is a yogi who is really enjoying the life, because he knows how to do it, how to enjoy it without getting caught in it. Of course it doesn't happen overnight. In the beginning you get a little tensed up. You may think, "I must do this, I must do that, otherwise I won't get". So even in the name of yoga practices you lose the little peace you have. Yes, that happens in the beginning. But keep this in mind: "It is for the peace that I am doing everything. If the very doing itself is going to disturb my peace, either the doing is wrong or my approach is wrong", because yoga means peace and serenity of mind. So mind should be always peaceful, serene, calm, and clean—that's yoga.

But it doesn't happen overnight. Like everything, it takes time. If you are learning to play the piano, when do you begin to enjoy the playing? Probably after many years. In the beginning the fingers ache, the foot refuses to do its job. When you think of the foot, the finger is forgotten; when you think of the finger the foot is forgotten. It's a hard thing. So it's a serious business to learn, but it's worth it. When you get used to that, then you enjoy. A little anxiety is quite natural for any beginner, but when you get used to the practices you will also enjoy them. You will know the ultimate benefit. *Om Shanthi, Shanthi, Shanthi.*

Keep the Mind Charged



All actions can be done only when the mind is united with its organs. Thought is the real action. If you have control over the mind by steady practice and if you can regulate your emotions and moods, you will not do foolish and wrong actions. Meditation will help a lot in checking various emotions and impulses.

Leading a virtuous life is not by itself sufficient for God Realization. Constant meditation is absolutely necessary. A good and virtuous life only prepares the mind as a fit instrument for concentration and meditation, which eventually lead to Self Realization.

Put an iron rod into the blazing furnace. It becomes red like fire. Remove it, and it loses its red color. If you want to keep it always red, you must always keep it in fire. So also, if you want to keep the mind charged with the fire of Supreme Wisdom, you must keep it always in contact with the all-powerful fire of knowledge through your constant and intense practices. You must

keep up an unceasing flow of the Absolute Consciousness. Then you will have the *Sahaja Asastha* (natural state).

Concentration of the mind on God after purification can give you real happiness and knowledge. You are born for this purpose only. Instead of being carried away to external objects through attachment and delusion, concentrate upon God in the heart. Dive deep and merge within.

Real peace and happiness manifest only when the subtle desires and habits are thinned out and extinguished. When you fix the mind on your True Self even for a few minutes, purity and light are infused into the mind and subtle tendencies are thinned out. You will feel peace and bliss during these five minutes. You can, with the subtle awareness, compare this *ananda* (bliss) from meditation with the transitory sensual pleasure. You will find that this *ananda* is a million times superior to sensual pleasure. Meditate, feel this *ananda*, then you will know its true value.

You must be regular in your practice. Rapid progress and great success can be attained by regularity. Even if you do not realize any tangible result from the practice, you must plod on with sincerity, earnestness, patience, and perseverance. You will get success after some time.

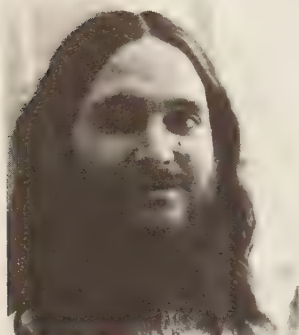
If the aspirant has the nature of being offended easily by trifling things, he cannot make any progress in meditation. Some aspirants get easily offended if their bad qualities and defects are pointed out. They become indignant and begin to fight with the person who exposes the defects, thinking that the person is concocting them out of jealousy or hatred. This is unfortunate. Other people can very easily find out our defects. One who has no life of introspection, whose mind is of outgoing tendencies, cannot find out his own mistakes. The self-conceit acts as a veil and blurs the mental vision. If an aspirant wants to grow, he must admit his defects if they are pointed out by others. He must try his best to eradicate them and must thank the man who points out the defects. He should cultivate an amiable, loving nature and adaptability. Then this bad habit will vanish. Only then can he grow in spirituality.

If an aspirant meditates upon his *Guru*, or spiritual guide, from even a great distance, then a definite connection is established between them. In response to the student's thoughts, the *Guru* radiates power, peace, joy, and bliss. The student is bathed in the powerful current of

magnetism. The stream of spiritual electricity flows steadily from the preceptor to his disciple, just as oil flows from one vessel to another. In proportion to the degree of his faith, the student can draw grace from his teacher. Whenever the student sincerely meditates upon his teacher, the teacher also actually feels the current of prayer or sublime thoughts which touches his heart. One who has the inner sight can see this vibration of peaceful thoughts in the ocean of Mind.

Generally, when you seem to have dreamless or deep, sound sleep, either you do not remember what you dreamt, or you fell into absolute unconsciousness which was almost death. But there is the possibility of a sleep in which you enter absolute silence, immortality, and peace in all parts of your being, and your consciousness merges into *Sat-Chid-Ananda* (the state of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). You can hardly call it sleep, for there is perfect awareness. In that condition you can remain for a few minutes. It will give you more rest and refreshment than hours of ordinary sleep. You cannot have it by chance, for it requires long training.

A sudden stroke of mystic illumination puts an end to empirical existence altogether, and the very idea of such a thing as this world or the narrow individuality of the spirit in this world absolutely leaves. When the *Yogi* has reached the last perfect stage of meditation and superconsciousness, all the residual actions are burnt completely. Then he is a *Jivanmukta*. He gets liberation in this very life.



Take It Easy, But Don't Be Lazy

Swami Asokananda

As seekers of the Truth, we sometimes make the mistake of dividing our lives' activities into worldly and spiritual categories. Sri Gurudev tells us that the true practice of yoga is a twenty-four hour a day affair. No part of life is excluded, whether talking, eating, or going to the bathroom. But the problem with this truth, as in all truths, is that the ego can mold it to its own comfort and advantage. "Devils can quote scriptures," as Gurudev puts it. If we avoid the formal practices given to us, claiming that "all is yoga", without acknowledging our real motivations, then we are just deceiving ourselves as well as others (just as the lazy person who prefers constantly to sit around and "meditate" is deceiving himself).

So, although "work is worship", work and worship, or the formal practice of the spiritual disciplines, should go together in one's life. Work without *sadhana* (spiritual practices) will bring all sorts of tensions, anxieties,

attachments, and disappointments. *Sadhana* without work, on the other hand, can be an excuse for laziness and not confronting our problems. It may be true that more advanced beings can solely work or solely do *sadhana* without falling into the usual complications. But, for most of us, the two must complement each other. Finding the balance between *sadhana* and work is Integral Yoga.

The formal *sadhana* that Gurudev has recommended includes morning meditation and *hatha yoga*, noon meditation if possible, and evening meditation. One can give many reasons for being irregular in the practices. Some are valid, others are questionable. So, it is important to be able to distinguish between the genuine reasons, and the reasons which spring up from the rationalizing of the inert or the restless part of the mind.

Normally, in the beginning the mind will resist the practices. Let's start with morning meditation. Getting up early consistently is admittedly hard.

It requires sincere conviction and will power. Then trying to meditate when the legs and back are aching is not always possible. Some mornings, when the mind is sleepy or overwhelmed by innumerable thoughts, we may feel that "wasting our time" is too charitable an expression for what we are doing. Because meditation will expose the lower nature, revealing to us its ways and tricks, the ego will create many symptoms to make the meditation as uncomfortable as possible in order to undermine this effort. As Gurudev has said, even many seemingly physical aches and pains in meditation can be mere phantoms created by the resistant mind. Needless to say, then, this same manufacturing of phantom obstacles applies as well to the mental level. If our interest is keen, however, the obstacles gradually weaken and fall away.

If we make it through the meditation, it is very tempting to crawl under the bedcovers and go back to sleep. The mind enjoys the easy, comfortable path, and *hatha yoga* may seem distasteful at the moment. We can again quote Gurudev, saying, "Take it easy", forgetting the second part of the sentence, "but don't be lazy". Most of us know the difference in how we feel and the quality of our energies if we do the *asanas* and *pranayama* instead of returning to sleep. But, for some reason, it is difficult to bring this fact to mind or to follow through with it when the time comes to decide whether to stay and do the *hatha yoga* or return to the bedroom.

Most people's lifestyles do not allow for a noon meditation.

But even for those of us who are allowed this luxury, we would often rather miss it. The mind is galloping outward with increasing momentum. To try to pull in the reins now and to still the mind's movement requires so much energy and control. So, we simply convince ourselves that we are too busy. But those who have experienced the beauty of the noon meditation would never like to miss it. Normally, the mind is more awake and the body less stiff than in the morning. And the noon meditation becomes a wonderful barometer to see how far we have gone from our center since morning meditation. We can use this time to readjust our energy and attitude, and to resolve any disturbance while it is still in the budding stage. Once it is a full-grown tree, it will be difficult to chop down.

We usually can come up with a host of excuses to avoid evening meditation. The number one excuse is, of course, tiredness. We're exhausted. The daily battle of life has wearied us to the bone. Or, the day's encounters have exasperated us, made us feel disgusted or depressed. Or, the mind is just too wound up; it needs some kind of release, and meditation is the last thing we want to think about. Or, our living situation does not afford us a favorable environment for the practices. But, if we are able to raise above all the obstacles and make meditation a part of our lives, then we will learn to appreciate its value.

After the day's work is completed, you can let go and allow the mind to rest in

meditation. Or becoming aware of what is not allowing the mind to relax, we can unfix those fixations. Gurudev has given us the camera analogy. The mind takes many pictures during the day, begins to develop them, then fixes the images. If allowed to develop, they become our compulsions, gnawing desires, attachments, neuroses, and bondages. However, if the film is exposed to the light *before* it's developed and fixed, the images are erased.

That exposure to the Light is our evening meditation. It will allow us a good night's sleep, without the need of sleeping pills. We won't have to toss all night due to unresolved conflicts. And if the quality of the sleep is there, we can wake up refreshed instead of feeling dull and irritable. Sri Gurudev has suggested that when the mind is disturbed by unresolved issues in the evening, you shouldn't just push them aside with your *mantra* repetition or other meditation practices. If the mind is very disturbed you may want to calm it first with a little meditation, but at some point it is best to analyze what is disturbing the mind, see where your attachment lies, and thereby let go of the disturbance.

Many aspirants are able to discipline themselves in the beginning, but in a few years they lose the interest. The same routine day in and day out becomes lifeless to them, and the mind resists the *sadhana*. Shunryu Suzuki says in his beautiful book, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, "When

you are tired of sitting, or when you are disgusted with your practice, you should recognize this as a warning signal. It is when your practice is rather greedy that you become discouraged with it. So long as you continue your practice you are quite safe, but as it is very difficult to continue, you must find some way to encourage yourself." We must encourage our interest in the practices and discourage the impatience and greediness for results.

Remembering the benefits of the practices will provide that encouragement. Whatever one wishes to achieve in life, control of the mind will prove very helpful, if not indispensable. Even if physical beauty is the goal, *sadhana* will help you to achieve it. Wrinkles, says Gurudev, reveal how we are being affected by the ups and downs of our lives. The *sadhana* will help us to stay balanced and to surf over the waves of life, instead of being overwhelmed by them. In fact, when we surf, the very difficulty of the wave becomes a source of challenge and fun. If your goal is to function well in the world and to be successful, then *sadhana* will be useful to you. There will be an increased energy and awareness, and also the capacity to focus that energy.

And if your goal is Enlightenment, then the practices will clean and calm the mind, which is our mirror, allowing us to perceive the Self undistorted, and to abide in the Eternal happiness and peace. That is the ultimate goal.

Treasures of a One-Day Fast

Prahaladan Mandelkorn

"In normal daily life, it's good to fast one day a week, taking only water or fruit juices—no dairy products."

-Sri Gurudev

In this issue, which is about the Yogic practices, we inaugurate a new feature article, Yoga in Practice, which is about the physical and mental techniques as taught by Sri Gurudev Swami Satchidananda. Each installment will contain useful, down-to-earth advice, and helpful suggestions, about a specific practice of Integral Yoga. May we all learn to use sincerely, and benefit from, these timeless teachings.

As yogis, we aim to unite our limited consciousness with the Infinite Consciousness. To help us achieve this, Sri Gurudev has given us a number of useful practices which aim at steadily purifying the body and mind. By eliminating toxins from the body we acquire radiant health, great strength and flexibility. By purifying our minds, they become peaceful and reflect our true nature which is Immortal and blissful. Weekly fasting is

an excellent means of purifying both the body and mind. Fasting one day each week, says Gurudev, is even better than long fasts.

But frankly it's not always easy to fast every week. As yoga students we all have to wrestle sometimes with our rebellious minds. Still, there is an art to fasting easily. Here are some hints I received from Gurudev, also from fellow seekers and my own practices.

First, know the benefits. These alone will bring motivation to do the practice. "When you fast, anything that's not good for your system is cast out", Gurudev explains, "because the energy in your body that is normally used to digest food is used for this elimination". The rest of the body, moreover, gets a nice day off, thus works better the rest of the week. So the weekly fast is a way of strengthening the whole physical system. If, by chance, an illness has been approaching, your resistance

is quickly built up during the fast-day, and then attacks the disease. People who fast regularly seldom get sick or, if they do, usually recover quickly.

Even if we fast only a half day or just skip one meal, the whole body feels better. We feel light and vigorous. The effects of a one-day fast are most noticeable, however, on the following day. The body feels purified, alert, and healthy. Our *sadhana*, or spiritual practices, become more productive and clear. Meditations are deeper, *hatha yoga* more sensitive, and the daily work becomes more efficient. It seems we are getting more done in less time, all in an easy, light-hearted way.

The weekly fast is also an effective means of weight control. Coupled with daily *hatha* practice, regular fasting will adequately deal with weight problems. If underweight, people become stronger and gain needed pounds. More people worry about being overweight. They can lose weight slowly and steadily by regular, weekly fasting. Unlike the aftermath of "crash diets", after which weight is quickly regained—the pounds stay off. Somehow, regular weekly fasting also seems to counterbalance a few "sins" from eating excessive or unhealthy food during the previous week. The body then cleans itself from the error of eating for the senses rather than the needs of the stomach.

Fasting is also a means of making an offering, a devotional practice. "Whatever minor discomforts I may feel during this fast, let this small sacrifice be an offering to You, Lord, that I may grow a little to be a purer instrument in Your service."

Beginning a fast with such an affirmation, or prayer, will strengthen the faster's resolve.

Having fasted, there is great satisfaction. Probably it's a little harder to fast this one day than the fourth or fifth day of a longer fast when the stomach has already shrunk and the mind isn't thinking about food. This is real *sadhana*, true spiritual practice. The one-day fast leaves a sense of well-earned pride that we are moving toward our goal. It builds will power and self-confidence: "I did it once; now I know I can do it. And, probably, I can do other things I used to doubt were possible."

Another great treasure comes from regular, weekly fasting; we begin to practice *pratyahara*, the withdrawal of the senses from the sense objects. Usually, we eat more for our tongues than for our stomachs. The tongue is difficult to control. Like other senses, it tends to control us. By taking control of the tongue, and thus the mind, for one day each week, we learn to withdraw our senses from the sense objects. Not that our goal is to eliminate sense pleasure. But we do mean to steer our own ships through life instead of being tossed about capriciously. The undisciplined mind runs us through our sense thirsts. By acquiring *pratyahara* we become masters of our senses and our minds, thus masters of living. "This is true freedom and real victory", says Gurudev. "If anybody is free from his own mind and senses, nothing can bind him."

Aren't these reasons enough to begin fasting one day each week? And there is a way to fast so it's not at all difficult. Begin by deciding, ahead of time,

what day you will fast and what you will drink—water or fruit juices. Preparation is the key to a smooth, easy fast. Plan for it a day or so ahead of time, so your mind will be prepared and cooperating. Strictly speaking, a fast means no food of any kind—just water to help flush out toxins. But most people find it easier to fast on fruit juices, at least the first few times. Gurudev has mentioned grape or apple juices, if possible, fresh rather than canned to avoid an acidity in the juice. Many people use orange juice, either fresh-squeezed or from concentrate. It doesn't matter so much what you choose, as long as it doesn't contain chemicals or glucose sugar. Fruit sugars are easily assimilated and keep you feeling strong and full of energy. Probably it's better not to take many different juices though; try to stay with a mono-diet—just one ingredient, such as apple or orange juice, for the sake of your digestive system.

Everyone's system is a little different. You can experiment. For many, a light herbal tea with a touch of honey will suffice, or a light vegetable broth. Some people have trouble with fruit juices and take juiced vegetables instead, such as carrot, tomato, or even V-8—but fresh is preferable. A little further from a pure water fast, it still leaves a light and clean feeling the next day. Try different liquids, eventually moving toward what is easiest for the body. Aim for fruit juices, then just drink water. Whatever you drink, take plenty of water during the fast day.

All these liquids will help eliminate toxins and make the fast more comfortable.

Choose a specific day of the week for the regular fast. In time, your body will get used to this and automatically begin fasting, even "calling" for that day as a rest from digestion. This, too, will make fasting easier. "The effect of fasting Thursday is felt on Friday", says Gurudev. Plan accordingly. Which day do you want to feel lightest and most clear of mind? Fast the day before. If fasting sometimes makes you feel a little weak or restless, you may want to fast during a day off from work. Many people, however, prefer a busy day when their minds are fully engaged on something other than eating. Don't fast during a day of heavy manual labor. Mental work, however, can be done even more effectively on a liquid diet.

Make a game out of the fast. See if some of your friends want to fast as well and, if possible, choose the same day. Then phone each other for mutual encouragement, particularly near the lunch and supper hours when the appetite is artificially stimulated by the clock. You might ease into a fast by just skipping a meal now and then. Notice how light you feel and how much more you enjoy the next meal. Eating when truly hungry is not only a delight, but all the food is digested. When the digestive fire is high, everything eaten is assimilated—no fats left to be stored in the body, and no gas left in the stomach from fermenting, partially digested food.

It's good to begin fasting after a light supper, through the whole next day and night,

and into the next morning. That gives the body time to clean itself out. If that seems hard at first, you can try fasting from late afternoon to late afternoon. Then you won't go to bed hungry. It's an easy fast that gives confidence to beginners. Even easier is fasting from after lunch one day to before lunch the next day. You can experiment, working up to a full one-day fast.

Remember that it's a game. Stay ahead of the fast. You can avoid a gritty feeling that sometimes creeps up as toxins are being eliminated. Some people may feel a little irritable, distracted, slightly headachy or restless. Usually, you can bypass these side-effects by taking showers and drinking plenty of water *before* the symptoms occur. During the day you may be tested—and tempted to break the fast. That's part of the game. Recognize it. Friends may invite you for pizza or bring you a nice piece of chocolate cake—right in the middle of the fast or near its end. Be strong then, and be wise during the fast day. The first few times, stay away from your kitchen, restaurants, and grocery stores. If you are tested, you can do some deep-breathing practices to quiet the mind, take an extra shower and an enema.

No need to be apprehensive about cleaning the intestines with a warm-water enema, an excellent cleansing during a fast. People who haven't had an enema since childhood, and recall it unhappily, can forget that. Administering an enema to yourself when you are well and the bowels are empty is easy and not unpleasant. It will surely make

you feel much better during a fast, and should probably be used near the end of each fast day. Afterwards, rest awhile.

Ideally, it's best to end a fast by eating lightly—even after a one-day fast. Take a little yogurt or fruit to break the fast, certainly not a huge feast weighing down the newly-clean body and mind and abusing the sensitive stomach. Take advantage of the wonderfully light feeling you are now enjoying. Eat lightly for a couple of meals during the day. In fact, Gurudev teaches that it's best to eat only one full meal per day as a matter of course. That's a true Yogi. Have beverage or fruit at other mealtimes. Two meals a day, Gurudev adds, and we can still enjoy the world and have good health. Three full meals and we're just asking to get sick.

By fasting regularly, one day a week, you'll soon notice how the mind and body enjoy this practice and call for it to continue. Until then, you can develop the habit by drawing up a chart or marking a space on your calendar to check off each week you fast. You'll get stronger and stronger, but don't be rigid. Sometimes it's best not to fast—if you're under stress, depressed, or friends whom you should host have unexpectedly arrived. Be a little flexible with yourself and with others. In such circumstances, fast on another day.

By acquiring this beautiful yogic practice of fasting one day each week, you'll see your taste begin to change naturally. The pure body calls for an ever healthier, lighter diet. Then the mind becomes calm and life seems sweeter.



-Niranjan Mishaan

The Water, The Lotus and The Light

Swami Devaananda

This article is part of a continuing update about the evolving plans for the L.O.T.U.S., the Light of Truth Universal Shrine. Sri Swami Satchidananda has conceived the L.O.T.U.S. as an ecumenical temple dedicated to the Light. For years, it has been his wish to build a permanent place where all religions are equally revered, where the saying, "Truth is One, Paths are Many", can be realized. Efforts towards the manifestation of this lotus-shaped temple are now underway by students of Sri Swami Satchidananda and many followers of the Light.

The temple will be constructed in the shape of a lotus blossom with the eternal light in its center. Like the lotus flower, the shrine will seemingly float on a reflecting pool of water. Thus, the structure of the shrine, even in its physical elements, will embody symbols of universality and ecumenism—the Water, the Lotus, and the Light. The architecture of the shrine will express the truth that all

religions, though differing outwardly, are totally one in essence.

According to Mircea Eliade, noted religious scholar, water is of major importance as a purificatory or ritual substance. In the Hindu tradition, dipping into the Ganges River has been for ages, a sacred act in preparation for worship. Washing of feet and hands before worshipping or in honoring guests is known in the Eastern and Western traditions. In the Christian tradition, Jesus received the baptism of water. Both Christians and Jews have always used water for spiritual cleansing in their rituals.

Similarly, the lotus is a universal symbol. In ancient Egypt, the divinized dead were believed to be reborn from lotus flowers, thus symbolizing an evolution to a higher consciousness. Also, in both the Buddhist and Egyptian traditions, the lotus flower represents the sun, which symbolizes the Inner Light of the Self.

In many traditions, the

Light is a central, universal theme. For example, in Zoroastrianism the Light is especially revered as a focus for worship. The Hindu uses a *ghee* light, the Jew and Christian use the candle flame; other ancient traditions use the Sun, even the Moon and the Stars. Because light is not limited to any particular form, its worship also is limitless. Adoration of the Divine as the Light, in all its forms and manifestations, is found in all cultures and religions, thus symbolizing the One Truth common to the traditions.

Within the shrine itself, the central Light is at the hub of a wheel of alcoves (one in every petal), each alcove with an altar to a different religion.

The alcoves, from equal distances surrounding the Light, seem to derive their one, essential truth from the common source of the Universal Light. Here, even on the physical level, the light draws our awareness and complete attention; on the spiritual level, this Light is the culmination of universality and ecumenism. Just as the light of all the religious paths emanates from the one Divine source, so the beams of light will shine upon the altars, all coming from the central source of Light. This eternal lamp of Heavenly Radiance, which may be discovered in our own hearts as well, symbolizes the cosmic Light of Truth inherent in all the religious approaches. *Om Shanthi, Shanthi, Shanthi.*

BOSTON MARATHON L.O.T.U.S. BENEFIT

This year the Boston Marathon provided a unique opportunity to raise funds for the L.O.T.U.S. Over eleven thousand people ran the twenty-six mile race, the oldest and most prestigious such race in the world. Our own Swami Dharmananda, a senior disciple of Sri Gurudev and founder of our vegetarian Baba Burger industry, ran for his second annual attempt.

Surya Tyler suggested that we all pledge an unspecified amount of money for each mile that Dharmanandaji would run, and then donate the proceeds for the L.O.T.U.S. Pledges and donations began to stream in, and on April 16 Swami Dharmanandaji successfully completed the entire length of the twenty-six mile course, shaving twenty-two minutes off last year's time. In the process, demonstrating his joy and exuberance, he managed to perform numerous cartwheels throughout the course, the last two at the finish line! His long hours of training not only were an inspiration to others, but also helped towards the eventual fulfillment of the dream of a Universal Shrine.

Throughout the years, Gurudev has frequently taught us to simply offer what we can—whatever talents, skills, resources, or experience we may have—to the service of God and His creation. We want to thank Swami Dharmanandaji, Surya Tyler, and all others who have worked so beautifully together. They have succeeded in combining hard work and dedication with great fun. The result is for the benefit of all humanity.



The Hensels with Sri Gurudev

DAY-BY-DAY WITH SRI GURUDEV

January - February 1979

DENVER: The Guru Goes Skiing

On January 4, due to the generosity of Carl and Marnie Hensel, the Denver community was blessed with a visit by Sri Gurudev. The family has endeared itself to him in the past, and this year invited him for a skiing trip to Dillon, Colorado.

The day after arriving, Gurudev took to the slopes for his first attempt at down-hill skiing. Even though he slipped once or twice, the instructor was surprised to see him doing a few turns after only a half hour. The next day he tried cross-country skiing and ended with a moonlit glide across the sparkling slopes—in a snowmobile! For one who sees the whole world as a "fun", it was a fun-filled time for all.

On January 7, when Sri Guru-

dev returned to Denver, he gave satsang at the I.Y.I., which was overflowing with his devotees. In response to a question about moving to the ashram, he said that a person should first be living at peace and harmony in the outer world, and not be in a rush to move into an ashram. First one should take care of the responsibility to one's family and function well in the everyday world.

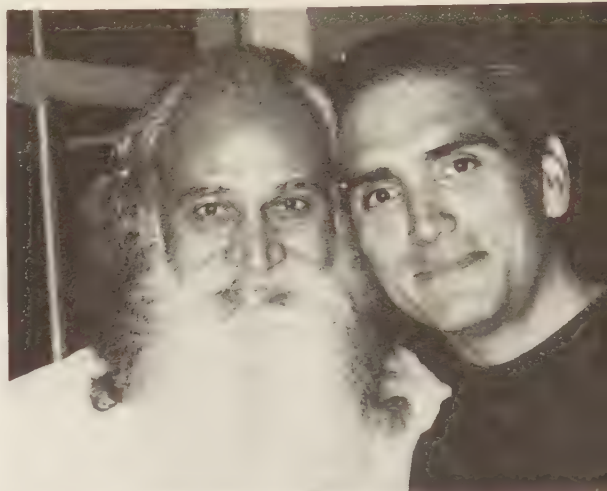
The highlight of the gathering occurred when Sivaraj Carman, a three-year old boy, presented Gurudev with one million dollars in play money for the L.O.T.U.S. temple. All too soon, it was time for his Denver children to see him off for his flight to Santa Barbara, California.

—Marty Phillips, Denver, and
Shanthi, Pomfret Center, Ct.

SANTA BARBARA: Are You a Good Catch?

On January 13, Brother Matheo, a Franciscan monk from the Santa Barbara Mission and dear friend of the ashram, visited us for Saturday night *satsang* with Sri Gurudev. During the evening, the loving exchanges between him and Sri Gurudev warmed everyone's hearts. It was truly wonderful to see an ecumenical spirit between Eastern and Western monastic traditions, and to witness that consciousness of unity in action. At the end of the evening, Gurudev playfully asked Brother Matheo, "Are you a good catch?". The Brother replied, "Yes!", and Gurudev threw him an orange.

Other dear guests were also present: Sri Yogi Heckel and his secretary Shanthi (who, apparently, is just as sweet as our own Shanthi who is Gurudev's secretary). After the *satsang* ended,



Brother Matheo with Sri Gurudev

Yogi Heckel commented that he had just received the richest *prasad* (consecrated food) that he had ever tasted. He wasn't just speaking about the sweets that had been given out.

-Krishnadasi Mouw, and Swami Dayananda Ma, Santa Barbara

SANTA BARBARA: Nuclear Energy

On January 14, Eleanor Anderson, a devotee who is also a member of the Santa Barbara People Against Nuclear Power, invited Gurudev to address the group. Gene Hoffman, one of the founders, respectfully introduced Gurudev to a gathering of about fifty advocates of non-violent civil disobedience.

Gurudev said that he was impressed with their desire to include the great virtue of *ahimsa* (non-injury) in their lives. He reminded them that, as long as we have hatred toward anybody, then we still believe in the strength of our minds and bodies and not in the soul force of God within. All those who want to do something towards the reformation

of the world should first realize the soul force within.

The group was keenly interested in Gurudev's stance. He pointed out that those who want nuclear power plants use the energy shortage as a reason. "What is the limit?", Gurudev asked. Even if we allow this nuclear energy it's not going to be enough, because we keep using and wanting more. So, if we learn to save energy, then we will have enough. The socially conscious group questioned Gurudev intensively. He fielded their inquiries with his convincing expertise in world affairs. Again he pointed to his theme, "Set the man right and the world becomes all right".

-Krishnadasi Mouw, S. Barbara

PASADENA: Best of All Worlds

Also during January, the International Co-Operation Council held an eight-day festival in Pasadena, California, the purpose being to "include the best of all worlds". On the twenty-first, Gurudev had been asked to speak at a morning lecture. Sri Swami Kriyananda, founder of Ananda Cooperative Village, had also been asked to speak at the same time in another room. What a surprise to see them together as they spontaneously agreed to appear in one auditorium! It was a real treat to see their generosity and non-competitiveness.

Swami Kriyanandaji set a beautiful mood with his music followed by an enthusiastic discourse on spiritual love and the joy of giving no matter what is given in return. Gurudev thanked Swamiji for so ably paving the way, saying that we

had heard from the plus side of the pleasure-and-pain pendulum and also needed to examine the minus side. Because the world will always swing from one to the other, from joy to sorrow, we must learn to raise ourselves above the dualities of pleasure and pain. He gently reminded us that we actually educate the children to differentiate between dirt and gold, and so create desirable and undesirable objects in the world.

That night, Gurudev gave a particularly brilliant talk, with stunning effect. Although many of us have frequently heard his basic ideas, even in the same words, it is a source of perpetual amazement to experience the remarkable freshness of Gurudev's talks and the power of his presence.

*-Krishnadasi Mouw,
and Ganga Marceaux*

NAMBASSA, NEW ZEALAND: Music and Healing Arts

On January 25, Gurudev arrived in the country of New Zealand to open the three-day Nambassa music and healing arts festival. As he stood outside his hotel room in Waihi, he could hear the first sounds of the festival which would begin the next morning. A steady stream of cars whizzing down the highway kept up, without break, far into the night and the next morning. Local people informed us that it had been that way for two solid days! They all expressed amazement and good-natured curiosity about this whirlwind phenomenon just a few miles from their doorsteps. None were as sur-

prised as ourselves, when we read the Auckland papers describing the crowd's size as forty-thousand people. Before the weekend was over, that figure was to swell to between fifty and sixty-thousand!

Months before, Gurudev had received a heartfelt request from a young man named Peter Terry to come to New Zealand. Peter, head of the Nambassa new-age community in New Zealand, had simply asked that Gurudev open and bless the festival. Gurudev had agreed and afterwards, in his talks, praised the young man for inspiring the whole country to come forward and share his



ideals of clean and natural living. Gurudev also commended Peter Terry for using the power of music to bring the people together (Peter had arranged for the most famous New Zealand and Australian performers to participate) and, complementing the musical events, present all the beautiful ideas of alternative living, natural foods, and healing. It was the largest outdoor gathering in New Zealand's history.

On the morning of January 26, as Gurudev was driven to the site, he was reminded of another festival which he had attended over ten years ago. There, too, had been immense streams of people driving and walking from many miles for the event. There it had been necessary to fly him in by helicopter! Here the crowds were not as huge, but it looked similar. Thousands of sunbaked faces were happy and smiling, many waving in recognition as they saw him pass. Endless rows of cars were lined up on the highways and parked in the surrounding fields. Policemen were directing traffic at every junc-

tion using walkie talkies. Something else was strikingly the same—the mood. Everybody was happy and helpful. Even the seeming difficulties became sources of amusement. The joy of being together engulfed and overwhelmed any petty or limited thoughts in the mind.

I See a Woodstock Here

Gurudev, a striking and dramatic figure on the main stage, stood before thousands of people in a natural, grassy amphitheatre. Under a dazzling blue sky, the entire festival was spread out before him, twenty acres of rolling green fields overlooking the beautiful Coromandel coastline. Then his opening prayer floated out over the heads and fields—causing a hush. When he spoke, he told them of the previous festival, ten years ago. "I see a Woodstock here." The crowd burst into applause and cheering! He couldn't have said anything better!

During the three days, Swamiji spoke six times, sometimes on the main stage, also at side stages set aside for smaller

groups. He encouraged them all to show their country and the world that they could stay together peacefully for the entire three days. If they wanted the older people to accept some of their new ideas and listen to them, he suggested, now was the chance to prove themselves and inspire confidence by having everything go well. He reminded them that the press and media sometimes even wait for an incident to happen, and then they report only the bad aspects—so not to let anything happen which the media could pick up and distort. Specifically, he asked them to keep the grounds clean, and to leave the place as clean and beautiful as when they arrived.

Tea Tent

During the second and third days, the winds blew so fiercely that the multi-colored flags and tents, which were spread out over the festival site, flapped and blew from morning to night. Some lovely people were operating a tea tent which served natural snacks, and were immediately attracted to Gurudev, staying with him all through the days. A small trailer had been parked next to their tent for Gurudev's rest during the daytime, as it was too difficult and time consuming to drive back and forth through the crowds. As it was too windy to hold Swamiji's nightly talks at the outside amphitheatre, they offered to empty out their tent and have the talks there. It was a large, though simple tent, with no electricity, lights, or furniture—offered freely from hearts filled with love.

I helped make everything

ready for Gurudev, including the tiny, battery-operated public address system. However, the arrangements were all makeshift. When Gurudev entered the tent and went to sit down, he immediately mentioned that I had failed to fix his seat high enough to see the faces of the people. As I scanned the furniture-bare tent for anything that could be used for a platform, one boy jumped up and started carrying over the box on which he had been sitting. It was a wooden crate—full of garbage! My mind screamed at the idea! Though I tried to stop him from bringing the box, he brought it to the front of the room next to Swamiji. The next moments were incredible, for the entire roomful of people experienced Swamiji's total equanimity. Without so much as a blink, he looked calmly at the crate (and at the garbage) which was being offered to him. His expression never changed! He didn't show the slightest trace of judgment. The whole roomful of people broke into laughter and applause at Gurudev's reaction! Soon a clean crate was brought in. The raised seat was then lovingly covered with a cloth—and that is where Swamiji was to sit for two nights.

Two minutes after beginning his talk, Swamiji stopped to scold a lady in the front row who was playing noisily with a little child. "There is plenty of room for playing outside. That little girl doesn't need my teaching. She is already an angel!" As the laughter subsided, he added, "You are all thirsty to know God". The room was silent. He had spoken the

truth.

As he continued speaking, the wind blew strongly outside. Gradually it grew dark. A few petrol lamps were lit and enhanced the beautiful, mysterious, and close family feeling. No one wanted to leave though it grew late. Even at the back of the tent, against the darkening blue sky, I saw people standing. Surely they could barely see or hear, yet they didn't move. The looks on their faces were so beautiful in the soft, glowing light—in his Light.

In the presence of these open, simple, and natural people, he could fully express who he is, and they all received his teachings. I could see the belief and understanding in their eyes when he said, "The Light within is the same in all of us".

Spiritual Symposium

On the second afternoon of the festival, a spiritual symposium was held on the outdoor stage. Gurudev was joined by speakers representing many spiritual paths, including Sufi, Christian, Ananda Marga, Paramahansa Yogananda, Theravada Buddhism, Maori People, and even Womens' Liberation! Jonathan Daemeon chaired the panel and asked each person to speak about their own tradition. After a while, somehow, it seemed that each person was trying to make their own point, and the discussion even got a little heated from time to time. It was obvious that even the audience was disappointed at the lack of unity being expressed. Each time it was Gurudev's turn to speak, he simply passed and let the others say what they were itching to say. Finally Jonathan Dameon, the mod-

erator, said, "Swamiji, I have really learned something important today. You have no need to speak yourself. We can all learn something from that. But now I would really ask you to please say a few words to us, *for our sake*".

Gurudev began with a short story. "In India, when I was a child, we used to get little sugar candies during some of the special holidays. All kinds of figures were made out of sugar and they were allowed to harden into those shapes. So, as children we would go and pick out what shapes we liked. Then, having our own favorite, we would fight and argue over which was better. 'My elephant is better than your horse, or your dog!' But, eventually, when we ate them they were all so sweet! *Equally sweet!* Do you get my point?" The audience laughed and cheered. Yes, they got his point! That is what they had come to hear!

In his brief talk, Gurudev agreed that probably we should not always refer to God as *He*; it is just our habit. Because, ultimately, God is neither He nor She nor It, but certainly He can express in all the forms. So he apologized to the woman, who had strongly been advocating Womens' Liberation, for always using the masculine name for God. Everyone agreed, and she especially felt very happy. Then Gurudev made another point. "I would also like to say that in spirituality, there is no male or female. That is only in the body. Not even in the mind. There is not a male mind and a different female mind. In Spirit we do not have to concern our-

selves with these limitations. And in our spiritual growth there is no distinction. So we don't need to bring those distinctions into the spiritual realm."

Gurudev had keenly sensed the deep longing for a spirit of unity in those who were listening to the symposium. As it was ending he spontaneously said, "Why don't we end with a small peace prayer? Let us all hold hands and chant *Om Shanthi, Shanthi, Shanthi*". Once again he satisfied this longing in the hearts of so many who were tired of disharmony. The field of hundreds of people was filled with a beautiful spirit, and afterwards everyone hugged each other. As Gurudev left the stage, people flocked around him, some crying, some so happy, all wanting to simply thank him for bringing this message. In the midst of all that, as he was walking down the steps from the platform, Gurudev noticed a nail sticking up from a wooden plank. He stooped over, picked up a stone, and hammered the nail back in so that none of the many bare feet could get hurt there. Right next to me I heard one girl with tear-filled eyes murmur to herself, "My God, that is how we should live".

Take This Spirit

On the last day of the festival, Gurudev once again spoke on the main stage, before which thousands were sprawled out on the grass (some having lived and slept there for the three days). His message was short and simple. "You have created something beautiful here. Take this loving spirit back into your lives, into everything you do. Let this spirit overcome any little difficul-



ties and disagreements that sometimes come in between. And once again, when you leave this place, let the whole country and world have only good to say about what went on these three days."

Gurudev took this opportunity to say a few words to the policemen present, some of whom had arrested small groups of participants for smoking marijuana, which incidents had gotten publicized in the press. "At festivals like this, you should sometimes know how to just turn your eyes away. We should be a little flexible. It is a celebration, so naturally, out of fifty thousand people, a few would be doing something like that. That's a celebration. Even you, in your own homes, might celebrate in that way. So we should be a little lenient at these times, and not cause a big disturbance and make a small incident become a big one in the press. We all have to live together." Once again the crowd cheered and, as Gurudev left, the beautiful pastoral hillside of Waihi, New Zealand was filled with the vibrations of thousands of voices chanting *Om Shanthi*.

After the festival, Gurudev

visited the town of Tauranga on the coast. After an evening talk to an enthusiastic public, Padma Coombes, a long-time student, received permission to open an Integral Yoga Teaching Center. Gurudev also visited AIO-WIRA,

a yoga retreat run by devotees of Swami Venkateshwara Maharaj. The students greeted him warmly and enjoyed an intimate *satsang* with Sri Gurudev, asking him many questions about his own spiritual journey. -Shanthi

FIJI AND HAWAII

On the island of Fiji, Gurudev stayed in the town of Suva with Jocelyn and Kim Kimberling—who have known him since they lived in Ceylon where they worked for the United Nations. On the first night he joined a small reception for diplomats, including the Indian and American ambassadors, who were waiting to greet him. The next day, after a public talk, the minister for youth programs, Mr. Vivekananda, requested that he return to start a program for the youth of the island. Before leaving Suva, Swamiji also visited the Sanmarga Sangham, a devoted group of Tamil-speaking spiritual seekers, headed by Mr. Pillai. Another devotee, Mr. Mulchand Patel, owner of the Capricorn Hotel, accompanied Gurudev everywhere, ready to give of his loving service at any moment.

Before leaving for Hawaii, we stopped for a few hours in Nandi—just long enough for Swamiji to give an inspired talk at the Hindu temple on the airport compound. The Postmaster General, Mr. Muni Ratnam, a long-time friend and devotee, arranged the talk. For the remaining hours in Fiji, Mr. Ratnam hosted Gurudev for a love-filled meal and *satsang* at his nearby home.

After Fiji, Gurudev visited the Hawaiian Islands. In Honolulu for one day, Gurudev spent the afternoon speaking with revered Master Subramuniya and two of his

close disciples, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Nicholson. Their conversation ranged from the universality of all religious paths to the use of holograms for the L.O.T.U.S. temple. That evening he visited the Siddha Yoga Center, run by devotees of Sri Swami Muktananda, and also gave a public talk at the nearby Unitarian Church.

Arriving on the island of Maui, Gurudev was met with great love by Gandhi Bond and Alexandra Morrow, whom he has named Alikanandi. Alikanandi accommodated Swamiji in her home for two days, showering him with love and comfort like the Divine Mother herself. Her devotion and absorption in the Divine Reality created a peaceful haven in which he could rest between all the travels. -Shanthi, Pomfret

Akahi Farm, Maui

At Akahi farm, a spiritual retreat center on the island of Maui, Gurudev later gave *satsang*. He advised the islanders to take full advantage of being surrounded by Nature—to use it to live naturally in all health, peace, and harmony.

Swamiji also visited Haleakala Crater which, at ten thousand feet, is on top of the island. (Haleakala Crater, incidentally, was the site of the beautiful photograph of Gurudev for the biography. Ed.) Though the winds were sixty-miles per hour, Guru-

dev felt it would be an adventure, and off we went for a day of exhilarating laughter and fun as we stood on the top of Maui surrounded by Mother Nature in all her fierce glory.

That rainy evening, Gurudev gave a public talk to over three hundred at Seabury Hall in up-country Maui. In his last night on the island before flying off to the big island, he expressed his pleasure and inspiration that, in such foggy and misty weather, so many sincere seekers would travel far to share an evening of Truth.

-Gandhi Bond, Maui

Big Island

Winter is the dry season in Kona on the leeward side of the Big Island of Hawaii—at least it is supposed to be. On Sunday, February 11, after five continuous days of rain, torrential, tropical downpours, the storm broke for the blessing of Sri Gurudev's first visit to the main island of Hawaii. Referred to as Big Island, it is twice the combined area of the other six major islands of Hawaii. Its population is eighty-thousand on a land mass about the size of Connecticut.

Gurudev flew in from Maui with Shanthi and Gandhi to be greeted with the traditional flower *leis* (garlands) at the Keahole Airport in Kona. We followed the highway across old lava flows, for this is an island still being created, along the rugged Kona Coast, and then up the mountain to the little town of Kainaliu where Gurudev would be staying for the next few days.

After a few hours rest, we drove down to Kealahou Bay

and walked on an ancient *Heiau* (temple platform), and then looked across the bay to the obelisk marking the spot where Captain Cook was killed in 1778. We travelled further south on a one-lane road to the City of Refuge National Park—a reconstructed refuge for *kapu* (taboo) breakers and for losers in wars. Beside a temple house, Gurudev playfully posed beneath a fierce *tiki* (god). Then he quietly sat on the rocks beside the tide pools as the sun sank slowly into the clouds above the Pacific Ocean.

Back to the little town of Honalo where Swamiji gave a public talk in the meeting hall of the Daifukuji Soto (Buddhist) Mission. Swamiji spoke on Yoga and Spirit before a somewhat noisy crowd, many young children being present. He balanced the energy beautifully and brought us together by leading *Hari Om* and *Om Shanthi* chanting.

The next day we visited the Ganesha Temple in South Kona that is being built in a coconut grove by disciples of Master Subramuniya. Gurudev said that it reminded him of Ceylon and led us in a chant to *Ganesh*. Just before leaving, he sacrificed a coconut on the altar of the temple. Holding the coconut, then winding his arm, he hurled the coconut onto the unyielding surface. The hard, outer shell broke completely away, leaving the coconut meat in a round ball with two small fragments nearby. After *prasad* (consecrated food), we raced in our cars towards the Volcano National Park with a brief stop at the Punaluu Beach. Of iridescent black sand, this beach was created by the incessant pounding of the ocean waves

on the black lava rocks.

Volcano Park is a tropical rain forest at four-thousand foot elevation, with twenty foot high tree ferns and smoking lava steam-vents. It also includes Mauna Loa, an almost fourteen-thousand foot mountain that, in volume, is the largest mountain on earth. We watched a film of recent volcanic activity showing rivers and fountains of molten lava at two-thousand degrees Fahrenheit. After a picnic lunch, we drove around the crater, smelled the sulfur, and felt the land where mother earth is in the process of creation. From Kilueau, we could sometimes see the snow-clad Mauna Loa peeking through the clouds. On the Big Island you can snow ski in the morning and surf in the afternoon.

On the way home to Kona, we stopped at Wood Valley Temple—an old, Japanese Buddhist temple that has been

converted to a Tibetan Buddhist temple—and visited the resident Lama Nechung Rimpoche. After a pleasant visit at the brightly painted temple, we then raced seventy miles back to Kona.

The next morning, at Kona airport, Gurudev was presented with *kau kau* (sugar cane which is for eating, as opposed to field cane). Gurudev told us how an ideal friendship is like eating the sugar cane. You start at the top of the cane where it is a little salty but, as you work down the stalk toward the root, it becomes ever more sweet. So here was the beginning of Kona's friendship with Sri Gurudev—the heavenly island already sweet with the divine master. As the plane receded in the distance there was no sense of ending, just a beautiful beginning.

-Bhagavan Buritz,
Big Island, Hawaii

SANTA BARBARA: Home for Sivaratri

Although Gurudev had just returned from an extended trip to New Zealand and Hawaii, he unexpectedly blessed us with his presence for the *Sivaratri* celebration on February 24, which was held at the Church of Religious Science in Santa Barbara. While Shanthi showed the slides from the trip, Gurudev interjected with his own comments. Frequently, throughout the show, Gurudev would provide a name that Shanthi had forgotten. She humbly observed how remarkable it was that, despite the thousands of people he meets all the time, Gurudev will often remember a person after

not seeing him in years.

Gurudev was asked to speak about the significance of *Sivaratri*, the Hindu festival in honor of God in the aspect of the Father. Sri Gurudev spoke about the importance of seeing *Siva* as a force for removing impurity from the heart. Then a short *puja* (worship service) was done in honor of *Siva*. While we chanted, as Gurudev sat in his chair with his eyes closed, a powerful vibration swept through the room. Many of us later mentioned having felt purified from this experience.

-Krishnadasi Mouw, and Ganga Marceaux, Santa Barbara, Ca.